

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 00482 100754Z

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ACTION CU-03

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 0482

FOR: CU/ARTS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJ: EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS: ARISTID VON

WURTZLER AND THE NEW YORK HARP ENSEMBLE TOURING PRIVATELY

REF: STATE AIRGRAM A-9320

HARPIST ARISTID VON WURTZLER PERFORMED ONE CONCERT IN BANGKOK DURING SPRING 1974 UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP OF A PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS, THE BANGKOK MUSIC GROUP. HIS PERFORMANCE, AT BNC AUDITORIUM, WAS WELL ATTENDED AND BNC DIRECTOR CONCURRED WITH LOCAL NEWSPAPER REVIEWERS WHO PRAISED HIS ARTISTRY AND THE AUDIENCE'S ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE. BNC LOCAL STAFF MEMBER ALSO INDICATED HE WAS A REAL "GENTLEMAN" AND VERY COOPERATIVE.

POST AND EMBASSY ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION DID BECOME INVOLVED IN ONE ASPECT OF VON WURTZLER'S VISIT AND THAT WAS HIS ARRIVAL. THROUGH NO FAULT OF HIS OWN, THE PRIVATE ORGANIZATION WHO SPONSORING HIM NOT ONLY FAILED TO MEET HIM AT THE AIRPORT BUT ALSO HAD MADE ABSOLUTELY NO ADVANCE PREPARATIONS FOR GETTING HIS HARP THROUGH THAI CUSTOMS. CONSEQUENTLY, WHEN HE ARRIVED, THE CUSTOMS OFFICIALS REFUSED TO LET HIM BRING IN HIS HARP WITHOUT FIRST PAYING A REFUNDABLE UPON DEPARTURE \$10,000 GUARANTEE THAT HE WOULD NOT SELL THE INSTRUMENT IN THAILAND, A GOODLY SUM OF MONEY WHICH HE DID NOT HAVE AND HAD NOT BEEN PREPARED FOR. UNABLE TO REACH ANY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MUSIC GROUP, MR. VON WURTZLER TELEPHONED THE CULTURAL SECTION TO ASK FOR ASSISTANCE.

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WHILE HE WAITED AT THE AIRPORT, THE CULTURAL SECTION WAS ABLE

TO ENLIST THE SUPPORT OF THE EMBASSY'S ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL
WHO WERE ABLE TPERSUADE THE CUSTOMS OFFICIALS TO ALLOW MR.
VON WURTZLER TO ENTER THE COUNTRY WITH HIS HARP WITHOUT HAVING
TO PUT UP THE GUARANTEE. DURING THE SAME COUPLE OF HOURS, THE
SECTION WAS ALSO ABLE TO LOCATE ONE OF THE MUSIC GROUP'S
REPRESENTATIVES WHO THEN WENT TO THE AIRPORT TO METT MR.
VON WURTZLER AND TAKE HIM TO HIS HOTEL.
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